

Conservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday, May 14, 2013
Town Hall Meeting Room, Old Town Rd.
5:30pm

Present: Members: Chair Ned Phillips Jr., Vice Chair Fred Leeder, Marea Mott, John Hopf, Donald Littlefield and David Roosa. Absent: Leslie Slate. Also present was Terri Chmiel, Administrative Assistant for the recording of the minutes.

Call to Order

Chair Mr. Phillips, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.

Snow Fencing: Signage for Dunes, Donations, and Work Date

Mr. William Penn, representing Block Island Residents Association (BIRA) spoke from the audience. He updated the Commission on donations for the beach project:

- A total of \$12,000.00 was raised in donations;
- Including \$500.00 received from the Lions Club; and
- \$5,000.00 from the Roosa Foundation;
- 120-130 volunteers installed snow fencing;
- 70 rolls of fencing have been installed;
- To date \$8,400.00 has been spent on fencing.

Mr. Hopf reported on the condition of Mansion Beach, he summarized that the beach will come back before the season. Discussion ensued where to place the remaining 30 rolls of fencing. A work session will take place on June 8, 2013 to install more fencing at Mansion Beach.

Mr. Penn suggested advertizing in the summer issues of the Block Island Times. He recommended placing a quarter page ad inform visitors of the signage that will be posted along the beaches for a total cost of \$1,600.00. Mr. Penn explained that BIRA would like to have their logos fixed on the signage; as well as, a potential donor. Mr. Phillips, Jr. replied to the logo request by explaining the Town Council would need to make the determination.

Mr. Hopf and Ms. Mott will gather information and pricing on the signs.

Merkler, William and McAloon, Shannon. Plat 9, Lot 58. ADVISORY to the Zoning Board of Review for a Master Plan Stage for an Application for a Major Subdivision to create six (6) lots. The property is located off Payne Road and Mohegan Trail.

Mr. Leeder noted the fact that not much jurisdiction under the Conservation Commission regarding the advisory to the Zoning Board for a subdivision. However, the Commission discussed the following:

- The density could be an issue.
- Change of the atmosphere of the land.
- High water tables.
- Open Space.
- The east elevation would be more in keeping with the land.

The Commission was in consensus with concerns regarding the plans as presented and would like the property owner to look at different configurations to utilize the space.

Mr. Phillips, Jr. made a motion for an unfavorable advisory to Zoning Board of Review for the plan as presented based on the configuration of the dwellings and lot lines.

5Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Mott Littlefield and Roosa)
1 Absent (Slate)

1Nay (Hopf)

Update/Act on Tree Ordinance

Review and clarify questions from the Town Council

Q. Add language preventing a conflict of interest between the Tree Warden and other professional arborists in business competition.

A. The Tree Warden would never be employed to remove a tree.

Q. The Tree Commission's duties should include developing guidelines

- **Develop a process for planting trees on public land. Include a process for neighbors to have a say if they wish but the good of the larger public should also be considered, trees are a public resource. Tree selection should plan for future growth (encroachment on surrounding properties or into views)**
- **Develop a process for removing trees on public lands. Should the impact on surrounding properties (view shed) be a factor?**
A. Yes – would develop.
- **The good of the larger public should be considered, trees are a public resource. Include guidelines for the conservation of valuable wood and the disposition or removal of chippings and cord wood.**

Correspondence

2012 Mapping Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) in Rhode Island Coastal Waters

The Commission is in receipt of the 2012 Mapping Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) in Rhode Island Coastal Waters dated April 2013. Mr. Phillips, Jr. referenced the documentation of a 23% increase of eelgrass in the Narragansett Bay.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Phillips, Jr. made a motion seconded by Mr. Littlefield to approve the minutes of April 9, 2013 as presented.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Hopf, Mott Littlefield and Roosa)	0 Nays
1 Absent (Slate)	

Adjournment

Mr. Leeder spoke to a biologist in regards to Don Thimble's concern of vegetation growing on top of the septic fields at the Beach Pavilion. Mr. Leeder informed the Commission the existing vegetation is not deeply rooted in this area; therefore, no concern at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14p.m. in a motion by Mr. Phillips, Jr and seconded by Mr. Leeder.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Hopf, Mott Littlefield and Roosa)	0 Nays
1 Absent (Slate)	

Respectfully submitted

Terri L. Chmiel

Minutes approved: September 10, 2013